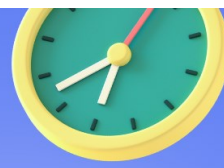




The weekly newsletter article of Parkside Chapel

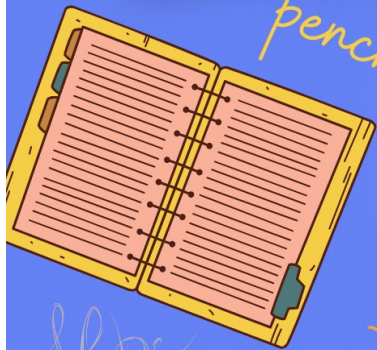
LIFENEWS



faith



Love



penchant

WORD OF THE DAY

Challenge



hope

Blessed

agog



COFFEE



by Gordon Lanpher, Children's Pastor
parksidevisalia.org

The tradition in my family is to make our Christmas stockings fun, using silly little gifts. Things like crazy socks, candy, gum, etc. This year in my stocking, my mother gave me a "word of the day" calendar. It has been fun learning a new word or two. I am agog (very eager/curious) to see what words come up throughout the year.

Today's word was *penchant*. The Oxford Dictionary defines it as "a strong or habitual liking for something or tendency to do something." I have a penchant for having a latte every morning as part of the start of my day. I have a penchant for reading a lot. You may have a penchant for other things.

As I thought about this word, God showed me that this word can have spiritual implications. Do my strong desires, my penchants, align with him? Is my tendency towards being drawn to sin, or is my tendency to be drawn towards Jesus? Is my penchant for God or my flesh?

As Christ followers, we are on the journey of sanctification. We are on the journey of becoming like Christ in all we do, say, and think. We are on the journey of loving with all of our heart, soul, and mind (See Matthew 22:37). It is a journey of making Christ the center of our lives, as Pastor Nigel wrote about in his last article.

In Hebrews 12:1-2 it says, "Therefore since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." This is taking our penchant for sin and making it a penchant for Jesus. Removing the things that keep us from God and fixing our eyes on him. The strong focus on him will keep us not only from sinning but also on mission—the race marked out for us—the mission of making disciples in the world.

So where is your penchant today? Do you find yourself desiring God and the things of God? If not, turn back towards him. If it is sin that is holding you back, confess it. If it is something else, make Jesus the center again. May this be the year where you can say, my penchant was for God, and I had a habit of turning to God in everything! It didn't matter if it was ugly or good. My impulse wasn't towards going to other things, even good ones. My impulse was to go to the One who loves me unconditionally and who makes me holy.

May God be the penchant of your life this year!